

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Wedge, at 5:42 PM, and the following members were present:

Ms. Sylvia Wedge, Chair	Mrs. Terri Cortvriend, Clerk	Mrs. Marge Levesque
Mr. Richard Carpender, V. Chair	Mr. Jamie Heaney	Mr. Douglas Wilkey

Also Present: Dr. Lusi, Assistant Supt. Jermain, Patti Cofield, Attorney Updegrove, Attorney Robinson, Marissa Mello

Absent: Mr. Michael Buddemeyer

A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Levesque to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exceptions (a)(1) Job Performance/Personnel Matters, (a)(2) Collective Bargaining and/or Litigation; or (a)(8) Student Discipline. So voted 6-0.

Public Session recessed at 5:42 PM and resumed at 7:10 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Ms. Wedge announced that an Executive Session was held prior to this meeting, and one vote was taken on litigation. Mr. Heaney made a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.
2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Lusi welcomed everyone from Hathaway School. Dr. Lusi referred to the two newspaper articles on the co-taught classes. She stated that Jill Rodrigues from the Sakonnet Times and Gina Macris from the Providence Journal did a very nice job and really captured the fact that the two teachers in a co-taught classroom provide assistance and support to all students in the class.

Dr. Lusi reported that she received a memo from Paula Jo Gaines from the Department of Education regarding teacher shortages in Rhode Island. Dr. Lusi announced that the Commissioner's review of our high school's compliance with state regulations on high school graduation requirements is continuing, and we are making progress. She has been invited to another focus session with the Department of Education in February.

Dr. Lusi reported that she attended a statewide meeting regarding the high school regulations with Mr. Littlefield and Assistant Superintendent Jermain. Mr. Littlefield will be bringing the draft program of studies to the next School Committee meeting, and further discussion on the new state regulations on high school requirements will take place.

Lastly, while Dr. Lusi had hoped to recommend a Finance Director this evening, the candidate withdrew her application, and we will be reopening that search. The salary that NESDEC recommended for a pure Finance Director did not attract the kind of candidate we are looking for, so the position will be posted as a Director of Finance and Administration.

- a) **Teaching and Learning:** Assistant Superintendent Jermain reported that professional development is continuing, and co-taught classes are in the planning stages for next year.
- b) **Finance and Operations:** No report.
- c) **High School Liaison, Marissa Mello:** Miss Mello reported that a board of six college freshmen who graduated from Portsmouth High School last year gave a presentation in early January to the current senior class about college life. The junior class of 2008 has been having a lot of college assemblies about college planning. The second quarter of the year is ending on Friday. A blood drive is scheduled for the beginning of February. In the last blood drive, Portsmouth High School was the number one blood donor in the State.

3. **SPOTLIGHT**

- a) **Hathaway School.** Dr. Christina Martin, members of her staff, and several students gave an informative presentation on their “Journey Through Books” program.

4. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of the minutes of the meeting held January 9, 2007. (This item was withdrawn until the next meeting.)

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Heaney asked to move Item c) to the Business Agenda for discussion.

- a) **Coaching Appt. - PHS.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee approves the coaching appointments at Portsmouth High School for the 2007 spring season, as presented.”
- b) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation for retirement of Timothy Coen, Special Education Teacher at Portsmouth High School, effective with the last day of the 2006-07 school year.”

- c) **Resignation of Facilities Supervisor.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee accepts the resignation of Richard Elmasian, Facilities Supervisor, effective February 1, 2007.” This item was moved to the Business Agenda.

Mr. Carpender made a motion to approve items a) and b) on the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.

6. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

Item c) was moved from the Consent Agenda.

- c) **Resignation of Facilities Supervisor.** A motion was made by Mr. Carpender and seconded by Mrs. Levesque to accept the resignation of Richard Elmasian, Facilities Supervisor, effective February 1, 2007. So voted 6-0. Mr. Heaney suggested that an Exit Interview be conducted with Mr. Elmasian. Dr. Lusi stated that she had spoken with Mr. Elmasian. Dr. Lusi thanked Mr. Elmasian for his years of service with the Portsmouth School Department and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Business Agenda:

- a) **Appointment – Finance Director.** This item was withdrawn by Dr. Lusi.
- b) **Agenda Item Request – PHS Gymnasium Heating System.** Requested by Mr. Jack Callahan. Mr. Callahan voiced his concerns about the heating system at the Portsmouth High School gymnasium. Ms. Wedge stated that Advanced Building Concepts is very well aware of the heating issue, and they are working on it. Dr. Lusi stated that the system needs to be tested and balanced. Mr. Elmasian reported that two units appeared to be functioning today, and two are not. Mr. Callahan asked if the warranty is being extended, and Mrs. Cortvriend said the GCOC is looking into it. Mr. Wilkey made a motion that the School Committee demands that all parts are working and acceptable in the heating system before any more money is expended. Seconded by Mr. Heaney. Mrs. Cortvriend disagreed with that stating that they had agreed to pay the \$30,010.86 invoice because it has been outstanding for some time. Dr. Lusi stated that there is a \$19,000 retainage to cover punchlist items. Mr. Larry Fitzmorris thinks the School Committee, not the GCOC, should get involved to resolve the problems. The motion passed 5-1. Mrs. Cortvriend was opposed.
- c) **Discussion/Approval – November/December Financials.** Mr. Carpender made a motion to approve the November and December financials. Seconded by Mrs. Levesque. So voted 6-0.

- d) **Discussion/Approval - RIPEC Aquidneck Island Study.** Mr. Carpender made a motion to approve the following resolution,

“WHEREAS the funding of public education is of growing concern within the State of Rhode Island and the Township of Portsmouth; and

WHEREAS there is increasing focus on the efficient use of resources for the funding of local education and municipal government; and

WHEREAS there is increasing interest in forecasting costs and developing cost-sharing solutions across Aquidneck Island, as well as across Rhode Island;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Portsmouth School Committee pledges its support to the proposed RIPEC Aquidneck Island Study and agrees to pay up to \$4,166.67 for this purpose. This support is contingent upon the school committees and governing councils of all three Aquidneck Island communities agreeing to participate in the study. The necessary funds are to be taken from the following areas of the School Department budget: \$2,166.67 from object code 640 – Fees and Dues, and \$2,000 from object code 329 – Other Pupil Services.

The Superintendent is directed to transmit this resolution to the Town Administrator so that it may be presented to the Town Council.”

The motion was seconded by Mrs. Cortvriend. So voted 6-0.

7. **SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA**

- a) **Policy:** No report.
- b) **Finance:** Mr. Carpender stated that for the last several months, there has been a lot of talk about this community being divided on a number of issues. He is disconcerted about some of the ads and articles that are being put out by the PCC relating to the budget, in particular in their efforts in the court case, which are misleading. He stated that negative comments are not serving the community well, and we need to move forward without being disrespectful and accusatory. Mr. Carpender scheduled a Finance Subcommittee workshop on Tuesday, January 30th, at 6:00 PM, location to be determined.
- c) **Gymnasium Construction Oversight Committee (GCOC):** Mrs. Cortvriend suggested having a School Committee workshop with the GCOC, John Brooks, Luis Torrado, and the engineer, to discuss all outstanding issues on the PHS gymnasium. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 31st or February 1st, at 6:00 PM, at the High School Library.

- 1) **Approval of Progress Payment for Gym.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee approves the progress payment of Invoice #05-095-00013 from Advanced Building Concepts in the amount of \$30,010.86.” (This item was withdrawn pursuant to 6. b) above.)
- d) **Fundraising:** Mrs. Cortvriend stated that she will be meeting with the brick vendor on Thursday to work on the orders.
- e) **Prudence Island School Working Committee:** Mr. Carpender stated that they had a subcommittee meeting scheduled for last Saturday, however, because of the wind, the captain of the ferry couldn’t guarantee that the boat would be coming back from the island, so the meeting was postponed. It is tentatively rescheduled for February 10th.

A motion was made by Mrs. Cortvriend and seconded by Mr. Carpender to adjourn the meeting. So voted 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for

Terri Cortvriend, Clerk